



PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS

VOL. 69

SEPTEMBER 1954

NO. 9

Indian Health Services Transferred to PHS

Provision of health and hospital services for Indians will become the responsibility of the Public Health Service July 1, 1955. The transfer of these activities from the Department of the Interior has been authorized by Congress in the bill H. R. 303 (P. L. 568), signed by the President August 5, 1954. The law does not affect the general education and welfare programs for Indians.

Approximately 400,000 Indians who are registered as members of the estimated 250 tribes in the United States, as well as the Indians and other natives of Alaska, qualify as beneficiaries for medical services under Federal auspices. Indians are located in 47 of the 48 States.

At present, about 100 Public Health Service physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, and sanitary engineers are on detail to hospitals, health centers, and clinics maintained on behalf of the Indian population.

The Health Branch of the Bureau of Indian Affairs now operates 58 hospitals with 3,792 beds, 15 health centers offering outpatient services, and 2 public health units on the Pima-Pagago and the Navajo Reservations. About 64 public health nurses of the bureau are engaged in home care and community health activities.